

Khalkha Mongolian

The **Khalkha dialect** (Mongolian script: ᠬᠠᠯᠬ᠎ᠠ ᠠᠶᠢᠯᠠᠭᠤ, *Qalq-a ayalyu*,

Mongolian Cyrillic: Халх аялгуу, *Khalkh ayalguu*, [χɑɮʁɑjɮ.ɡʊː]) is a dialect of central Mongolic widely spoken in Mongolia. According to some classifications, the Khalkha dialect includes Southern Mongolian varieties such as *Shiliin gol*, *Ulaanchab* and *Sönid*.^[3] As it was the basis for the Cyrillic orthography of Mongolian,^[4] it is de facto the national language of Mongolia.^[5] The name of the dialect is related to the name of the Khalkha Mongols and the Khalkha river.

There are certain differences between normative (standardised form of Khalkha) and spoken Khalkha. For example, the normative language uses proximal demonstratives based on the word stem ᠠᠨᠠᠨ:/n- (except for the nominative in [*ᠠᠨ*] and the accusative which takes the stem ᠠᠨᠠᠨ:/n-)^[6] and thus exhibits the same developmental tendency as exhibited by Oirat.^[7] On the other hand, the spoken language also makes use of paradigms that are based on the stems ᠠᠨᠠᠨ:/n- and ᠠᠨᠠᠨ:/n-.^[8] This seems to agree with the use in Chakhar Mongolian.^[9] The same holds for the distal demonstrative /tir/.^[10]

Khalkha may roughly be divided into Northern and Southern Khalkha, which would include Sönid etc. Both varieties share affricate depalatalization, namely, /tʃ/ > /ts/ and /tʃʰ/ > /tsʰ/ except before *i, while Southern Khalkha patterns with Chakhar and Ordos Mongolian in that it exhibits a dissimilating deaspiration, e.g. *tʰatʰa > /tatʰ/.^[11] However, Mongolian scholars more often hold that the border between Khalkha and Chakhar is the border between the Mongolian state and the Chakhar area of South Mongolia.^[12]

Especially in the speech of younger speakers, /p/ (or /w/) > [ɸ] may take place, as in Written Mongolian *qabtasu* > Sünid [ɣaptʰäʂ] ~ [ɣaɸtʰäʂ] 'cover (of a book)'.^[13]

One of the classifications of Khalkha dialect in Mongolia divides it into 3 subdialects: Central, Western and Eastern. The orthography of the Mongolian Cyrillic alphabet is essentially based on the Central Khalkha dialect. Among the main differences is the pronunciation of initial letter x in feminine words which is in Central Khalkha pronounced as it is written, in Western Khalkha as kh, and in Eastern Khalkha as g. Example: хөтөл (Central Khalkha), көтөл (Western Khalkha), гөтөл (Eastern Khalkha). The initial letter x is pronounced in masculine words in Western Khalkha dialect as h (almost not heard) if the second consonant is voiceless, and is pronounced as gh in Eastern Khalkha. Example: хүтга (Central Khalkha), хүтга (Western Khalkha), гүтга (Eastern Khalkha). Initial т is pronounced in Eastern Khalkha dialect as d. Example: талх (Central Khalkha), талх (Western Khalkha), далх (Eastern Khalkha).

Juha Janhunen - 'Mongolian' book - from 2012 - grouping of Khalkha dialects

In Juha Janhunen's book titled "Mongolian", he groups the Khalkha dialects into the following 19:^[14]

- Outer Mongolia:

Khalkha	
Native to	Mongolia
Region	Mongolia
Native speakers	3,000,000 (2010 census) ^[1]
Language family	Mongolic <ul style="list-style-type: none">Central<ul style="list-style-type: none">Khalkha
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	khk
Glottolog	halh1238 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/halh1238) ^[2]

- Central
 - Khalkha Proper dialect
 - northern Khalkha
 - southern Khalkha
 - Ulan Bator dialect of Khalkha
- Northern:
 - the Khotgoit (Xotgaid) dialect
 - the Darkhat (Darxed) dialect
- Southeastern:
 - the Dariganga (Darygengg) dialect
- Russia:
 - Tsongol (Tzonggel)
 - Sartul (Sartool)
 - officially, both are classified as "Buryat" dialects.
- Inner Mongolia:
 - the Ulan Tsab dialects:
 - the Chakhar (Tzaxer) dialect
 - the Urat (Ourd) dialect
 - the Darkhan (Darxen) dialect
 - the Dörben Huuhet (Deurben Xuuxed) dialect
 - the Muumingan (Moo Minggen) dialect
 - the Keshigten (Xeshegten) dialect
- Shilingol (Shiilin Gol) dialects:
 - Udzumuchin (Udzencem) dialect
 - Khuuchit (Xooced) dialect
 - Abaga (Abegh) dialect
 - Abaganar (Abeghner) dialect
 - Sunit (Seund) dialect

References

1. National Census 2010 of Mongolia (http://www.toollogo2010.mn/doc/Main%20results_20110615_to%20EZBH_for%20print.pdf) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20110915170555/http://www.toollogo2010.mn/doc/Main%20results_20110615_to%20EZBH_for%20print.pdf) 2011-09-15 at the Wayback Machine
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Halh Mongolian" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/halh1238>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. Svantesson et al. 2005: 143. Janhunen 2003: 179-180 mentions that such an approach might be possible. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 207 without further discussion include at least Shiliin gol and Ulaanchab into the Chakhar dialect.
4. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 372, also see Svantesson et al. 2005: 36

5. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 372, cp. Mongolian State (2003): [Törijn alban josny helnij tuhaj huul'](http://www.edulaws.pmis.gov.mn/edulaws/web/index.php?modules=law&viewid=2&law_id=189) (http://www.edulaws.pmis.gov.mn/edulaws/web/index.php?modules=law&viewid=2&law_id=189) Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20090822084246/http://www.edulaws.pmis.gov.mn/edulaws/web/index.php?modules=law&viewid=2&law_id=189) 2009-08-22 at the [Wayback Machine](#), retrieved 2009-03-27
6. cp. Street 1957: 88, IPA in accordance with Svantesson et al. 2005: 2,6-7, 91, but it follows Ölĵeyibürin (2001) in writing [ʉ] instead of [u].
7. Birtalan 2003: 220, Bläsing 2003: 239
8. Poppe 1951: 72
9. see Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 237. While this reference is a bit fuzzy as it includes parts of Southern Khalkh into Chakhar, it does not mention stems like ʉ : n-.
10. see the same sources as for /in/
11. Svantesson et al. 2005: 143, 206
12. e.g. Sečenbayatur et al. 2005: 207, 372-373, probably also Amaržargal 1988: 22-25
13. Ölĵeyibürin 2001: 17-18. He assumes voicing to be distinctive, while the above transcription follows Svantesson et al. 2005 in assuming only aspiration as distinctive.
14. Janhunen, Juha A. (2012). *Mongolian* (<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=SAIwgcg9ioPMC&pg=PA4#v=onepage&q&f=false>). John Benjamins Publishing. pp. On page 9, Juhanen writes: "In Outer Mongolia, the Khalkha group comprises, apart from Khalkha proper, the Khotgoit (Xotgaid) and Darkhat (Darxed) dialects in the north and the Dariganga (Darygengg) dialect in the southeast. This group also includes the Tsongol (Tzonggel) and Sartul (Sartool) dialects, officially classified as "Buryat", on the Russian side. On the Inner Mongolian side, the Khalkha group comprises the so-called Ulan Tsab (Oulaan Tzab) dialects, including Chakhar (Tzaxer), Urat (Ourd), Darkhan (Darxen), Muumingan (Moo Minggen), Dörben Huuhet (Deurben Xuuxed) and Keshigten (Xeshegten), as well as the so-called Shilingol (Shiliin Gol) dialects, including Udzumuchin (Udzemcen), Khuuchit (Xooced), Abaga (Abegh), Abaganar (Abeghner) and Sunit (Seund). Most of the dialects genetically belonging to the Khalkha group but areally spoken on the Inner Mongolian side are in some ways transitional, in that they incorporate secondary influences from dialects of the Khorchin type. Khalkha proper itself is also dialectally diversified and comprises, among others, two major groups of subdialects known as Northern Khalkha and Southern Khalkha. The modern Ulan Bator dialect of Khalkha, which for political reasons has a prestige status in Mongolia, has also developed into a distinct form of speech.". ISBN 978-90-272-3820-7.

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